

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) A method ~~for~~ of preparing a composition for a coating, wherein a layered, inorganic filler, which filler is a natural or synthetic layered double hydroxide, is subjected to an ion exchange with a modifier, which modifier comprises at least two ionic groups, which groups are separated from each other by at least four atoms, and which modifier comprises at least one anionic group, and wherein the modified filler, together with a polymer, is dispersed in a diluent.
2. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein the layered, inorganic filler is a natural or synthetic clay with a cation exchange capacity of 30-200 milliequivalents per 100 grams.
3. Cancelled
4. (Original) A method according to claim 3, wherein the cationic group is an ammonium, phosphonium or sulfonium group.
5. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein the layered inorganic filler is a natural or synthetic layered double hydroxide.
6. (Original) A method according to claim 5, wherein the layered double hydroxide satisfies the formula (I):
 
$$[M_{(1-x)}^{2+} M_x^{3+}(\text{OH})_2] [A_{xy}^{y-} \cdot n \text{H}_2\text{O}]$$
 wherein  $M^{2+}$  is a bivalent cation,  $M^{3+}$  is a trivalent cation,  $x$  is a number between 0.15 and 0.5  $y$  is 1 or 2,  $n$  is a number from 1 to 10, and  $A$  is an anion selected from the group consisting of  $\text{Cl}^-$ ,  $\text{Br}^-$ ,  $\text{NO}_3^-$ ,  $\text{SO}_4^{2-}$  and  $\text{CO}_3^{2-}$ .
7. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 5, wherein the modifier comprises at least one anionic group.
8. (Original) A method according to claim 7, wherein the anionic group is a carbonate, sulfonate, or phosphonate group.

9. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the modifier comprises an aromatic group.
10. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the modifier comprises an organic dye.
11. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the diluent is polar.
12. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the polymer is selected from the group consisting of polyurethanes; polyacrylates; polymethacrylates; polyesters; polyethers; polyolefins; polystyrene; polyvinyl chloride; alkyds; nitrocellulose; epoxides; phenol resins; amino resins; silicones; polysiloxanes; organic polymeric-inorganic ceramic hybrid materials; and combinations thereof.
13. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein an initiator is dispersed into the diluent.
14. (Currently Amended) A The coating composition for coating prepared by the method of claim 1.
15. (Currently Amended) A composition for coating comprising a polymer and a modified layered inorganic filler dispersed in a diluent, wherein the filler, which filler is a natural or synthetic layered double hydroxide, is modified by ion exchange with a modifier which comprises at least two ionic groups, which groups are separated from each other by at least four atoms and which modifier comprises at least one anionic group.
16. (Cancelled)
17. (Previously Presented) A coating formed upon curing of an applied composition according to claim 14.
18. (Currently Amended) A layered inorganic filler, which filler is a natural or synthetic layered double hydroxide, modified by ion exchange with a modifier which comprises at least two ionic groups, which groups are separated from each other by at least four atoms and which modifier comprises at least one anionic group.
19. (Previously Presented) A coating comprising the composition of claim 15.

20. (New) A method of preparing a coating composition, wherein a layered inorganic filler is subjected to an ion exchange with a modifier, said modifier comprising at least two ionic groups, at least one of which is an anionic group and at least one of which is a cationic group, said at least two ionic groups being separated from each other by at least four atoms, and wherein the modified filler, together with a polymer, is dispersed in a diluent.